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ABSTRACT

This report provides the Washington State legislature, the Governor, and other interested parties with an update on the accountability performance of each of the state's public baccalaureate institutions (Central Washington University, Eastern Washington University, Evergreen State College, Washington State University, Western Washington University, and University of Washington). It compares the 1998-99 academic year performance of each institution with its own 1998-99 targets and with its performance from the preceding year. The legislature has defined five areas of performance measurement. The first three, undergraduate graduation efficiency index, undergraduate student retention, and five-year graduation rates, are common to all state institutions. The fourth measure, for faculty productivity, is reported by all institutions except Evergreen State College. Each institution also includes one or more measures that are institution-specific. Performance data in each area for each institution is accompanied by brief explanatory comments summarized from institutional reports submitted to the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board. (SM)

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ED 441 384

# March 2000 Accountability Update

March 2000

Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board

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# March 2000 Accountability Update

*March 2000*

The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) last reported to the Legislature on accountability in its January 1999 document, "Performance Funding and Accountability: Progress Report and Recommendations for the Future." The purpose of this brief report is to provide the Legislature, the Governor, and other interested parties with an update on the accountability performance of our public baccalaureate institutions.

In its 1997-99 budget proviso the Legislature defined five performance measures on which the state's public four-year institutions were to report:

1. ***Undergraduate Graduation Efficiency Index***, a measure of how efficiently students complete their degrees, by taking into consideration the total number of credits earned, dropped, repeated, transferred and required for graduation.

2. ***Undergraduate Student Retention***, the proportion of undergraduate students who continue to be enrolled from one year to the next.

3. ***Five-year Graduation Rates***, the percentage of students who begin as freshmen who graduate within five years.

Two additional measures—which differed from one institution to the next—were also stipulated.

4. ***Faculty Productivity Measure***, a mixture of measures, related to outcomes of faculty work, that are generally different for each institution.

5. ***Unique Accountability Measure for Each Institution***, reflective of the mission of each four-year public institution.

In this document we briefly compare each institution's 1998-99 academic year performance with its own 1998-99 targets, and with its performance from the preceding year. Performance measures for each institution are accompanied by brief explanatory comments that we have summarized from institutional reports submitted to the HECB.

In the tables that follow each institution's performance on the three common measures is first described, followed by its performance on two institution specific measures. For each school these consist of faculty productivity (a common goal, measured in dissimilar ways by each institution), and a set of measures chosen by the institution itself.

The Higher Education Coordinating Board will next report on accountability to the Legislature on November 15, 2000. Its November report will contain data about the performance of institutions from the 1999-2000 academic year, it will review recent accountability policy initiatives, and it will provide Board recommendations about the future of accountability policy.

| Central Washington University | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Common Measures*** | **1995-1996 Baseline** | **1995-1998 Average** | **1997-1998 Performance** | **1998-1999 Target** | **1998-1999 Performance** |
| **Graduation Efficiency Index** | | | | | |
| a. Freshmen | 91.9% | 89.7% | 87.9% | 92.3% | 86.87% |
| b. Transfers | 84.6% | 84.5% | 83.15% | 85.19% | 82.40% |
| **Undergraduate Retention (Overall)** | 74.4% | 80.8% | 80.3% | 76.03% | 80.72% |
| **5-Year Freshman Graduate Rate** | 39.5% | 39.8% | 38.9% | 41.1% | 39.3% |
| ***Institution-Specific Measures*** | | | | | |
| **Faculty Productivity** | | | | | |
| a. Student Learning Outcomes | 1.3% | -- | 32.9% | 42.5% | 71.2% |
| b. % Faculty Mentoring Students | 14.5% | 19.43% | 26.3% | 27.3% | 24.12% |
| c. Student Credit Hours/Per Faculty FTE | 1:1000 | -- | 1:1007 | 1:1006 | 1:1033 |
| **Transfer Students With Declared Majors** | 47.7% | 65.4% | 79.5% | 81.0% | 76.9% |
| **Minority Graduation Rate** | 19.9% | 20.92% | 21.6% | 20.5% | 22.55% |
| **Internship Participation** | 6.52% | 6.56% | 6.76% | 6.88% | 7.25% |

***Summary:*** ***CWU met five accountability targets for the 1998-99 academic year. The five measures for which targets were met were undergraduate retention rate, percentage of programs with student learning outcomes, ratio of faculty FTE to student credit hours, minority student graduation rate, and percentage of students in cooperative education internships. CWU did not meet targets for either native freshmen or transfer graduation efficiency, native freshmen fifth year graduation rate, percentage of transfer students with declared majors after three-quarters, or faculty participation in mentoring programs.***

# Central Washington University

## *What the Measures Mean*

**Student Learning Outcomes:** Measures the percentage of courses with specifically stated, publicized program learning outcomes.

**% Faculty-Student Mentoring Students:** Measures the percentage of full-time faculty mentoring students in established programs that incorporate a faculty student mentoring relationship (e.g. CWU research symposium, McNair Scholars Program).

**Per FTE Faculty Student Credit Hours/Per Faculty FTE:** The ratio of FTE students to the FTE faculty for IPEDS faculty.

**Transfer Students with Declared Majors:** The percentage of community college transfer students who have declared majors by the end of their third quarter at CWU.

**Minority Graduation Rate:** Number of minority students graduating/all enrolled minority students fall quarter (averaged over three years).

**Internship Participation:** Percentage of students participating in cooperative education internships.

## *Comments On Performance*

**Graduation Efficiency**
CWU's Provost has charged the Advising Committee to conduct a comprehensive examination of its programs aimed at helping students progress toward degree completion. CWU expects its efforts to intervene early in students' careers at CWU to improve the graduation rates and efficiencies of their recent cohorts of native freshmen.

**Transfer Students with Declared Majors**
CWU's 1998-99 performance was above the adjusted accountability targets for 1999-2000 and 2000-2001, which were based on the three-year moving average. Their tentative conclusion is that the relatively small decline in performance observed during 1998-99 is due to cyclical variation rather than a secular decline in the quality of its advising programs.

| Eastern Washington University | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Common Measures*** | **1995-1996 Baseline** | **1995-1998 Average** | **1997-1998 Performance** | **1998-1999 Target** | **1998-1999 Performance** |
| **Graduation Efficiency Index** | | | | | |
| a. Freshmen | 88.3% | 88.1% | 87.7% | 89.31% | 87.5% |
| b. Transfers | 78.3% | 78.3% | 79.1% | 80.06% | 77.1% |
| **Undergraduate Retention** | 86.5% | 88.5% | 89.3% | 89.3% | 86.4% |
| **5-Year Freshman Graduate Rate** | 38.5% | 42.1% | 47.9% | 47.9% | 37.3% |
| ***Institution-Specific Measures*** | | | | | |
| **Faculty Productivity** | | | | | |
| a. Student Credit Hours/FTE Faculty | 274 | 285.6 | 295.5 | n/a | 334.6 |
| b. Use of Enrollment Resources | 47.0% | n/a | 49.6% | n/a | 48.8% |
| **Internship/Service Learning Experience** | 2284 | n/a | 2653 | n/a | |
| **Courses Using Distance Learning Technology** | n/a | 1.4 | | | 10.0 |

***Summary:*** ***From 1997-98 to 1998-99 Eastern Washington University improved in three of eight accountability measures. Measures showing improvement were Student Credit Hours per faculty, number of students involved in internships/service learning experiences, and number of faculty offering two-way video and on-line courses. Eastern did not show improvement on five measures, including graduation efficiency index (freshmen and transfers), undergraduate retention, 5-year freshman graduation rate, and use of enrollment resources.***

# Eastern Washington University

## *What the Measures Mean*

**Student Credit Hours/FTE Faculty**: A ratio of student credit hours to the number of IPEDS-defined faculty for fall quarter.

**Use of Enrollment Resources:** Total Number of Class Spaces filled divided by the total number of class spaces offered.

**Internship/Service Learning Experience:** Total number of students taking internship or cooperative education and service learning credits.

**Courses Using Distance Learning Technology**: The annual number of courses offered by faculty who use compressed video and/or the worldwide web.

## *Comments on Performance*

**Five Year Graduation Rate**
EWU's five-year graduation rate decreased; a predictable change in light of the fact that the freshman retention rate for 1995 was the lowest of the decade.

**Graduation Efficiency Index (GEI)**
The GEI for freshmen and transfer students at Eastern has remained relatively constant, and previous efforts to influence change have had minor impact. GEI imperviousness at EWU correlates directly with the university's percentage (25%) of education majors, who regularly take substantive numbers of credits beyond their minimum degree requirements. Efforts are currently underway to improve scheduling and course offering frequencies with the goal of more efficient overall degree completion.

| The Evergreen State College | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Common Measures*** | **1995-1996 Baseline** | **1995-1998 Average** | **1997-1998 Performance** | **1998-1999 Target** | **1998-1999 Performance** |
| **Graduation Efficiency Index** | | | | | |
| a. Freshmen | 91.6% | 92.4% | 92.2% | 92.11% | 93.66% |
| b. Transfers | 89.4% | 89.8% | 90.3% | 89.49% | 90.97% |
| **Undergraduate Retention (Overall)** | 73.0% | 74.6% | 77.1% | 75.6% | 76.9% |
| **5-Year Freshman Graduate Rate** | 54.1% | 46.9% | 49.1% | 54.2% | 48.2% |
| ***Institution-Specific Measures*** | | | | | |
| **Life Long Learning Index** | 31.82% | n/a | 31.83% | 32.70% | 31.53% |
| **Diversity** | | | | | |
| a. Retention, Students of Color (Olympia) | 71.0% | 75.1% | 79.7% | 73.9% | 79.2% |
| b. Faculty Development | 26.0% | 34.0% | 42.3% | 29.6% | 45.2% |
| c. Student Diversity Learning | 3.05 | 3.2 | 3.28 | 3.17 | 3.21 |

***Summary: The Evergreen State College exceeded 1998-1999 targets on 6 of its 8 accountability measures. It fell below 2 targets: the five-year freshman graduation rate and the capacity for life-long learning index.***

# The Evergreen State College

## *What the Measures Mean*

**Life-Long Learning Index:** TESC uses the "Life-long Learning Index" from the College Student Experience Questionnaire (CSEQ) as its faculty productivity measure. This index is a composite measure of students' estimated gains in learning in 11 areas, including gains in quantitative thinking skills, understanding developments in science and technology, and familiarity with the use of computers.

**Retention:** fall-to-fall retention of students of color (Olympia).

**Faculty Development:** proportion of faculty participating in development work designed to enhance their capacity to understand and work with diverse groups.

**Student Diversity Learning:** Students' reported gains in "understanding other people and the ability to get along with different kinds of people" (from the CSEQ).

## *Comments on Performance*

**Five Year Graduation Rate**
Evergreen anticipated a decline in the freshman graduation rate because of a drop in retention to the sophomore year for the 1994 entering cohort of freshmen. The relationship between freshman-to-sophomore year retention and five-year graduation rates is very strong at Evergreen.

**Graduation Efficiency**
Both the freshmen and transfer graduation efficiency measures exceeded targets in 1998-99.

**Retention**
Undergraduate fall-to-fall retention came in slightly over the 1998-99 target and was virtually unchanged from the 1997-98 actual (down 0.2%).

**Institution-Specific Measures**
Evergreen's 1998-99 targets were exceeded for each "institution-specific" measure.

| Washington State University | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Common Measures*** | **1995-1996 Baseline** | **1995-1998 Average** | **1997-1998 Performance** | **1998-1999 Target** | **1998-1999 Performance** |
| **Graduation Efficiency Index** | | | | | |
| a. Freshmen | 89.58% | 90.2% | 90.5% | 90.9% | 89.5% |
| b. Transfers | 79.83% | 81.3% | 81.8% | 82.59% | 80.85% |
| **Undergraduate Retention (Overall)** | 84.6% | 84.6% | 84.2% | n/a | 83.5% |
| **5-Year Freshman Graduate Rate** | 55.7% | 54.4% | 53.2% | 55.25% | 52.0% |
| ***Institution-Specific Measures*** | | | | | |
| **Faculty Productivity** | | | | | |
| a. Student Credit Hours/Faculty FTE | 197.1 | 198.1 | 198.9 | 203.0 | 199.4 |
| b. Individualized Enrollment/Faculty | 2.7 | 2.8 | 3.0 | 3.1 | 3.5 |
| c. Research and Scholarship | 79.3% | 79.9% | 80.5% | 80.2% | 81.0% |
| **Technology for Learning** | | | | | |
| a. Distance Student Credit Hours | 17,211 | 21,680 | 24,935 | 24,956 | 31,774 |
| b. Degree Programs via Distance | 3 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 9 |
| c. Reengineered Courses | 7 | 60 | 137 | 183 | 344 |
| d. Classrooms with Technology | 42.4% | 48.0% | 60% | 60% | 61.0% |

***Summary:*** ***Washington State University exceeded its 1998-99 performance targets for 6 measures, including individualized enrollment, research and scholarship, and four measures of technology for learning. The Washington State University fell short of achieving four common accountability targets that it set for 1998-99: freshman graduation efficiency, transfer graduation efficiency, undergraduate retention, and 5-year freshman graduation rate.***

# Washington State University

## *What the Measures Mean*

**Student Credit Hours per Faculty FTE:** Individualized Enrollment/Faculty: Measures the amount of work faculty do with students in the form of supervising undergraduate research, practical, internships, senior theses, private lessons, and independent studies.

**Research and Scholarship:** Measures percent of faculty completing scholarly work. Each department defines what constitutes scholarly works in that field and provides a count of the number of members who have completed work a baseline period of 1-3 years.

**Distance Student Credit Hours:** Credit hours earned through WHETS, EDP, and worldwide web.

**Degree Programs via Distance:** Number of degree programs offered entirely at a distance, though WHETS, EDP, and web.

**Reengineered Courses:** Number of courses reengineered to be asynchronous and technology-based.

**Classrooms with Technology:** Percent of University classrooms equipped to support technology-intensive teaching.

## *Comments on Performance*

**Graduation Efficiency Index (GEI)**
The GEI numbers for 1998-99 are not significantly different from those of the previous three years.

**Five Year Graduation Rate**
The 1998-99 Five-year Graduation Rate shows no increase over previous years. WSU notes that it is especially concerned with this pattern, and is looking for the causes of this phenomenon and evaluating the effectiveness of existing retention strategies.

**Freshman Retention**

WSU sustained the freshman retention rate of the previous year.

**Faculty Productivity**

All of WSU's Faculty Productivity measures show increases over the preceding year.

**Use Of Technology For Learning**

The number of student credit hours generated by distance education delivered through technology continues to rise, and reflects both increased use of WHETS (interactive video) and more students and courses in upper-division Extended Degree Programs. The category of Technology-equipped Classrooms has grown slowly during the past year because several renovations, and new building that are underway, but not yet complete. WSU expects that this measure will increase next year.

| Western Washington University | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Common Measures*** | **1995-1996 Baseline** | **1995-1998 Average** | **1997-1998 Performance** | **1998-1999 Target** | **1998-1999 Performance** |
| **Graduation Efficiency Index** | | | | | |
| a. Freshmen | 86.8% | 86.6% | 86.4% | 88.03% | 87.0% |
| b. Transfers | 80.2% | 80.0% | 80.6% | 81.67% | 81.5% |
| **Undergraduate Retention (Overall)** | 87.2% | 86.3% | 85.8% | 87.6% | 84.8% |
| **5-Year Freshman Graduation Rate** | 52.0% | 54.2% | 54.7% | 52.45% | 55.3% |
| ***Institution-Specific Measures*** | | | | | |
| **Faculty Productivity** | | | | | |
| a. Individualized Credit/FTE Student | 1.424 | n/a | n/a | 1.450 | 1.375 |
| b. SCH/Undergrad FTE in Writing Courses | 2.030 | n/a | n/a | 2.101 | 2.203 |
| c. Undergrad Degrees/Upper Division FTE | 0.396 | n/a | n/a | 0.400 | 0.566 |
| **Hours Scheduled in Computer Labs** | 8.89 | n/a | n/a | 9.10 | 24.90 |
| **Advising Contacts Per Student** | 0.935 | n/a | n/a | 0.967 | 1.041 |

***Summary: Western Washington University fell below its 1998-99 performance targets on graduation efficiency (both for freshman and transfers) and undergraduate retention, while exceeding its five-year freshman graduation rate target. Western exceeded two faculty productivity measures, and did not achieve a third (individualized credits per FTE student). It exceeded performance goals on two institution-specific measures: advising contacts and computer usage.***

# *Western Washington University*

## *What the Measures Mean*

**Individualized Credit/FTE Student**: Measures number of individual instructional activities per FTE student. These activities include internships, work on faculty research projects, and other one-on-one activities.

**SCH/Undergrad FTE in Writing Courses**: Student credit hours per undergraduate FTE in courses designated as principally or specifically writing based.

**Undergrad Degrees/Upper Division FTE:** The number of undergraduate degrees awarded annually per FTE upper division student stipulates a conversion ratio – how many upperclassmen are transitioned into graduates during a particular year. The more students remain as "fifth year seniors" or leave without graduating, the lower the conversion rate.

**Hours Scheduled in Computer Labs:** Measures the number of student hours scheduled in university or departmental computer labs per FTE undergraduate.

**Advising Contacts Per Student**: Total pre-major advising contacts and course selection advising contacts per FTE undergraduate (as reported by Academic Advising Center and Career Services Center).

## *Comments on Performance*

**Graduation Efficiency Index (GEI)**
Western Washington University's Graduation Efficiency Index (GEI) has held essentially constant for more than a decade, indicating near-immunity to institutional change efforts. Western's performance has improved over its baseline slightly for natives and substantially for transfers. The margin of improvement among transfers represents the greatest change observed over the 12 years that Western has measured the GEI. Western nonetheless did not meet its established targets for the 1998-99 year.

**Five Year Graduation Rate**

Western's five-year graduation rate of 55.3 percent surpasses the 2004 goal set by the state for comprehensive universities. Western has experienced a recent decline in its first-year retention, and will therefore experience a continuing decline in five-year graduation rates over the next four to five years for every student subgroup. Since non-retention is almost always greatest after the freshman year, the loss, already sustained, of about seven percent more freshmen than at its peak will be virtually impossible to overcome in the next few years. The greatest dip is expected in 2002.

**Student Retention Rate**

While Western's retention remains high at 84.8 percent, it has declined since its peak during the 1995-96 baseline year. The decline is primarily attributable to decreasing freshman retention. Western is launching new pilot programs that it hopes will reverse this decline.

**Increase Number of Undergraduate Degrees**

Western's analysis of last year's patterns and this year's patterns convinced them that this is a poor measure.

**Increase Individualized Instruction**

Western grew rapidly last year, and its student body became disproportionately lower division. That fact was further exacerbated by the departure of an unusual proportion of upper division students through graduation. Since individualized instruction applies primarily to upper division students, the measure declines when the percentage of lower division students increases.

**Increase Writing-Intensive Instruction**

Western exceeded its target for year 1998-1999.

**Enhancing Undergraduate Instruction through Computer Technology**

Performance in 1999 was higher than in 1998, but the rate of increase was slower than for the previous year. Western believes this is the result of two factors: it is approaching the natural limit for this type of instruction, and the most active area of innovation in the use of information technology is now in the expansion of web-based coursework, rather than in the use of computer laboratories for instruction.

## University of Washington

| *Common Measures* | 1995-1996 Baseline | 1995-1998 Average | 1997-1998 Performance | 1998-1999 Target | 1998-1999 Performance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Graduation Efficiency Index** | | | | | |
| a. Freshmen | 89.1% | 89.3% | 89.4% | 89.99% | 90.3% |
| b. Transfers | 80.4% | 81.3% | 81.4% | 81.84% | 83.3% |
| **Undergraduate Retention (Overall)** | 86.7% | 87.1% | 87.4% | 87.95% | 87.4% |
| **5-Year Freshman Graduate Rate** | 61.7% | 62.9% | 63.9% | 62.2% | 65.8% |
| ***Institution-Specific Measures*** | | | | | |
| **Faculty Productivity** | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment Space Used | 71.4% | n/a | 70.2% | 73.41% | 76.9% |
| b. Quality of Instruction | 94.5% | n/a | 93.7% | 95.0% | 92.9% |
| c. Research Funding/Faculty Member | $197,948 | n/a | $213,530 | $203,946 | $238,845 |
| d. Student Credits Hours/Faculty FTE | 202.47 | n/a | 202.80 | 204.00 | 203.50 |
| **Instruction** | | | | | |
| a. # undergrads with intense research involvement | 300 | | 653 | 345 | 2,412 |
| b. Individualized Instruction | 3.8% | | 4.0% | 4.0% | 4.2% |
| c. Public Service Internships | 500 | | 696 | 725 | 1,330 |
| d. % undergrads in faculty research | 20.7% | | 22.4 | 21.3 | 24.0 |

***Summary:*** ***Of the twelve 1998-99 accountability measures, the University of Washington met and improved upon ten, held steady on one, and did not reach its target on two: student credit hours per faculty FTE, and student satisfaction with learning.***

# *University of Washington*

## *What the Measures Mean*

**Percent Enrollment Space Used:** The proportion of offered enrollment space (course openings) used (filled through student registration).

**Quality of Instruction:** Percent of students evaluating "amount your learned in the course" as "good or better" (3.0 or above on 5 point scale) on standardized course evaluations.

**Funding for Research per Faculty FTE:** Grants and contracts per faculty FTE (in nominal dollars).

**Student Credit Hours Instructed Per Faculty FTE:** (Hours at graduate level are multiplied by 1.5 hours, then added to undergraduate hours to create total student credit hours).

**Undergraduate Credits Taken as Individualized Instruction:** Numbers of hours taken as individualized instruction/all undergraduate hours.

**Number of Undergraduates Involved in Research:** Number of students who receive research grants, data provided by Office of Undergraduate Education.

**Percent Undergraduate Credits Taken as Individualized Instruction:** This measures one-on-one mentoring opportunities for undergraduates offered by University faculty.

**Number of Undergraduates Involved with Public Service Internships:** Data provided by Carlson Center For Public Service.

**Percent of Undergraduates Reporting a Research Experience with Faculty:** Derived from an annual survey of graduating senior students, provides a measure of the cumulative experience over all undergraduate years.

## *Comments on Performance*

**Graduation Efficiency Index (GEI)**
Improved advising has resulted in better transfer articulation and student course-taking choices. Advising improvements have focused on transfer students, especially those who wish to study science and engineering. The much more rapid GEI increase for transfer students compared to students entering as freshman reflects this focus.

**Undergraduate Retention**
Overall retention remained stable. Retention did not increase, due to a drop in junior class retention. Sophomore and Senior class retention (88.0% and 88.9% respectively) increased, compensating for reduced Junior class retention, while Freshman class retention remained steady at 86.4%.

**5 Year Graduation Rate**
There has been a long-term increase in the five-year graduation rate from 49.9% in 1981 to 65.8% in 1998-99. This long-term trend is the result of improved course access, higher admission standards, and other factors. The five-year graduation rate has probably reached its peak.

**Faculty Productivity**
There was a reduction (92.9% from 93.7%) of the percent of students evaluating Quality of Instruction as good or better. Efforts are now underway to better understand why student evaluation of the quality of instruction has fallen and what actions should be taken to reverse this trend.